UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST
FACULTY SENATE
UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION COUNCIL

Minutes for the Meeting on March 25th, 2024
12:15-1:30 pm (on Zoom)

In attendance: AnnMarie Thorpe (guest), Brent Auerbach, Jeff Beaulieu, Elizabeth Connor, Elena Carbone, Justin Gross, Farshid Hajir, Christiane Healey (chair), Beth Lisi, Benjamin Marlin, Alison Messier, Nancy Noble, Elizabeth Porto, Gwyneth Rost, Wilmore Webley, Caralyn Zehnder, and SGA representative Ella P., standing in for Colin Humphries

1. Permission to record was given unanimously.

2. The minutes from the February 26th meeting were approved unanimously with 1 abstention and no corrections.

3. Membership Section Vote

   On March 7th, the council approved the proposed revision to its membership described in Section 18 of the Faculty Senate Bylaws (16 yes, 1 abstention, 0 no). Nancy Noble moved to approve the proposed changes to the UEC membership and Gwyneth Rost seconded the motion. The vote was held over email and the voting period was open from 9:30 AM on Tuesday March 5 until 5 PM on Thursday March 7.

4. Review of the annual report for 2022-2023: We will review the report in the April 22 meeting to give council members more time to provide comments.

5. Review and discussion: The Rules Committee would like our feedback on a proposal outlining required and recommended syllabus components, written by the Academic Matters Council and the Graduate Council.

   Discussion points (UEC version of proposal document):
   - Accessibility of syllabi
   - Guidance for asynchronous classes
   - Providing example(s) of alternative grading in addition to grade scales
   - Impact of attendance on grades
   - Inclusion of required policy statements (copied exactly) in addition to links. Students should be able to get the information from the syllabus without having to click on or copy & paste links.
   - Under Syllabus guidelines, include CTL's advice on creating an inclusive syllabus: https://www.umass.edu/ctl/resources/how-do-i/how-do-i-write-inclusive-syllabus.
   - Highlighting of more student success resources, including specific offerings from the Libraries, Office of Student Success, and Accessibility/Wellness.

6. Guest: AnnMarie Thorpe, Director of Disability Services, would like feedback on language relating to students with disabilities (proposed syllabus statement).

   Recommendations:
   - Not all students covered by DS have a disability as defined under the ADA. Suggest a change from "If you have a disability and are registered with Disability Services (DS)...", to "If you are registered with Disability Services (DS)..."
   - Use "are eligible" in place of "may be eligible". The use of the word "reasonable" in the sentence clarifies that students may or may not require an accommodation in a particular course.
   - Use first person throughout, rather than referring to the faculty/instructor in the third person. Strikes a tone of warmth and verbiage to express support and compassion.

7. Presentation and discussion: Suggestions for revision or new features of the (faculty-facing) webpage of Disability Services – Brent Auerbach, Alison Messier, Nancy Noble, Elizabeth Porto.

   Subcommittee met and shared observations/recommendations. A draft document was shared with the chair summarizing feedback on the DS website. This presentation and discussion will be on the agenda for the April meeting.

8. Discussion: Two faculty members have compiled concerns around how Canvas impacts the ability of faculty to teach using best practices to the Faculty Senate. The UEC has been asked to discuss these concerns.

   Tabled until next meeting.

9. The April meeting will be held in-person in the Campus Center on April 22nd. Lunch will be served. Please let the Chair know of any dietary restrictions.

Meeting adjourned.